

[<<Back](#)

Dry Summer Taxes Rafting Businesses

Our dry summer season means it's another big setback for the whitewater rafting business. Another scheduled water release from the Francis E. Walter Dam has been cancelled. It's the fourth time in two months that there will be no water release. There will also be no swift current in the Lehigh River anytime soon.

Deflated rafts, piled life vests and parked buses are signs of just how the rafting season has been in parts of Carbon County this summer.

With water low in the Lehigh River, the Jim Thorpe River Adventures staff is busy on the phone.

"We roughly made calls to about 200 people. So we each had a list of names and had to call. We get answering machines, we get other things but we get a lot of complaints because why we're calling in the last minute," said Leslie Wernett of Jim Thorpe River Adventures.

Fifteen additional water releases were planned this summer to pump \$34 million into the economy.

A new connector road would have allowed the dam to fill to higher levels if it rained.

"I guess the plan was to have these releases so that we could have more visits, which we did get more business but then when they were cancelled, it just wiped everything right out," added Wernett.

Not only have customers been affected by the cancellations, so have rafting employees. The manager said normally they have three to four ground crews and three to four guides. Now they're down to one each.

There's one more release scheduled for October 1 and 2.

"It has to rain pretty much from now to then in order to have it but I don't think they're going to have it," said Brendan Kuhn, also of Jim Thorpe River Adventures.

Because of the dry season, certain sections of the whitewater route couldn't be used.

"There hasn't been a lot of rain so therefore the rocks are sticking out and it's too hard to get down, it's very dangerous," Kuhn added.

For now, he said all he can do is pray for rain.



Send questions or comments about this web site to webmaster@wnep.com.
All content © Copyright 2002 - 2005 WorldNow and WNEP. All Rights Reserved.
For more information on this site, please read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#).